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Magistrate Calls Evidence 'Thin' in Spy Case

Charges Against Stenographic Firm Employee May Be Dismissed, Prosecutors Warned

By Ruth Marcus
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A federal magistrate yesterday called the allegations against Randy Miles Jeffries, the D.C. stenographic company employee accused of trying to deliver secret documents to the Soviet Union, "about as thin an affidavit as it has been my misfortune to see in recent years."

Unless the government presents "a lot more meat" at today's hearing, U.S. Magistrate Jean F. Dwyer warned, she might find that the government has failed to show "probable cause" for charging Jeffries with espionage.

Dwyer ordered Jeffries—the 12th person to be charged with espionage in the United States this year—held without bond pending a hearing today.

The FBI affidavit filed in federal court here yesterday said Jeffries, 26, smuggled a 200-page stack of classified papers out of the firm earlier this month and told a co-worker he "knew where he could get good money for the documents."

He told the co-worker that he "needed to find a Russian to sell the documents to," the affidavit said.

The affidavit also said that FBI agents who searched Acme Reporting Co., where Jeffries was employ-

ed as a messenger, on Saturday found numerous documents—most of which were classified either "secret" or "top secret" and "related to the national defense"—ripped in four pieces and placed in a plastic trash can.

The affidavit described Jeffries' activities helping destroy classified documents at Acme on Dec. 14. Later that day, Jeffries attempted to deliver the documents to the Soviet Military Office at 2552 Belmont Rd. NW, according to an FBI statement released after Jeffries' arrest Friday night.

Among other things, Acme transcribes closed hearings for the House Armed Services Committee. A source familiar with the investigation said the documents were transcripts of closed hearings of that committee.

According to the affidavit by FBI agent Michael Giglia, shortly before his arrest Friday Jeffries told an FBI undercover agent posing as a Soviet official that he had already delivered about 60 "sample pages" of documents to the Soviets. He said he had access to a bagful of ripped-up documents and offered to provide a "complete package" of three intact documents—including one classified "top secret"—for \$5,000, the affidavit said.

Jeffries' court-appointed lawyer, G. Allen Dale, asked Dwyer to dismiss the charges against his client. He said Jeffries "denies making those statements" to the FBI, and said that, even if he had, it was "just an idle boast" unsubstantiated by any evidence that Jeffries had, in fact, given the documents to the Soviets.

But Assistant U.S. Attorney Rhonda Fields said Jeffries told the FBI undercover agent that he had met twice with Soviet officials and delivered portions of documents to them.



BY RICH LIPSKI—THE WASHINGTON POST

Spy suspect Randy Miles Jeffries leaves federal courthouse after hearing.